

I was a swimming instructor at Camp Mystic. The other swim instructors were tough cookies, to say the least. Almost on a daily basis, one counselor or another would find a snake in the swimmers' water, grab it by the tail, toss it onto the bank, pick it up again by the tail, and crack it over her head like a whip until the snake was dead of a broken spine.

These same waterfront counselors told the campers, "Don't worry about the snakes in the swimming area. They're water moccasins, and a water moccasin never bites unless its head is above water so you can see it coming. Just move." Hey, I actually believed this information and to quell any fears, decided to not worry unless I saw a snake's head raised and swimming my direction. Never happened. Months later, I researched the subject at the library when I got home and discovered that the claim about snakes biting only above water was a big, fat lie.

At the end of that six weeks as a counselor at Camp Mystic, I had earned a total of \$50 (as well as my room and board). Back home in Houston, I took the entire \$50 and splurged on a pink leather jacket. It was a perfect fit, light pink in color, well made with silky lining. I loved that jacket and wore it all over the campus at Rice where I went to college. I even took it along when I got married to Fred at 22. That jacket lasted many years and probably rates as my lifelong favorite piece of attire.

Next time I'm going to concentrate my letter on the camper's favorite subject: FOOD. Until then, Hugs and lots of camper activities fun from
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